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Effective computer usage

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A nursing model for primary care practitioners

Developing a hospice

Teaching employed RNs

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The editorial policy of NURSING & HEALTH CARE is to offer diverse views on subjects of interest to readers. Articles represent the opinions of individual contributing authors and are not necessarily those of the editor nor the National League for Nursing.

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washington focus

National Institute of Nursing Approved in House

On November 17, the House of Representatives approved an amendment to the National Institutes of Health reauthorization which would create a National Institute of Nursing. The amendment was sponsored by Representative Edward Madigan (R.-Illinois), who had approached the nursing community with the notion last summer. Many nursing leaders believe that such an institution would give nursing greater legitimacy and visibility as a scholarly profession pursuing research endeavors in the university setting. Negotiations are underway to secure a sponsor for the amendment in the Senate. Look for an analysis and update in next month's *Washington Focus*.

Health Cuts are Capitol Hill Priority

As this issue of *Nursing & Health Care* went to press, Congress was moving toward adjournment, struggling with a number of belt-tightening proposals in health programs.

Among these is a plan proposed by Senator Robert Dole (R.-Kansas), chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, to reduce Medicare spending by $2.5 billion over the next three years. Dole's package would raise the monthly premium for Part B and the deductible payments for beneficiaries. This plan contains proposals to limit the amount of tax-exempt employer-paid health insurance premiums and to place a six-month freeze on physician fees as well.

Also under consideration is a proposal by Senator Edward Kennedy (D.-Massachusetts) and Representative Richard Gephardt (D.-Missouri), which they claim would eliminate the Medicare deficit. Major provisions of the plan are: 1) inclusion of all third-party payers in the prospective payment system; 2) establishment of incentives for the use of other than acute care services; and 3) requirement that physicians accept the federally established Medicare rates for their services as payment in full.

Proposed physician fee limits have received strong opposition from the American Medical Association, and considerable concern exists over those proposals that would increase out-of-pocket expenses for Medicare patients. However, if budget cuts are not enacted in Medicare and other health programs, the Fiscal Year 1984 budget ceilings will be exceeded, thereby adding to the overall federal deficit.

Economic Equity Act Pending

Legislation to improve and strengthen the rights of women in the workplace and elsewhere was introduced earlier this year by Senator Kennedy and Representative Patricia Schroeder (D.-Colorado). These bills, S. 888 and H.R. 2090, entitled the Economic Equity Act, include a number of major reforms to the tax, pension, and insurance laws as they apply to women. The five principal sections of the legislation are 1) pension reform; 2) IRA modifications; 3) tax treatment of child care expenses; 4) nondiscrimination in insurance premiums; and 5) enforcement of child support orders.

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FY 1984 Appropriations Bill Signed

A bill that appropriates funds to the Department of Health and Human Services for FY 1984 was signed into law by President Reagan on October 31, 1983. Following are the funding levels included for nursing education and research along with FY 1983 levels and President Reagan's FY 1984 requests, for comparison:

	FY 1983 Continuing Resolution	President's Request	FY 1984 Appropriation
Advanced Nurse Training	$13.26	$1.2	$13.26
Nurse Practitioners	11.76	6.0	11.76
Special Projects	6.33	6.0	7.16
Traineeships	9.6	—	9.6
Research Grants	5.0	—	9.0
NRSAs	1.0	—	—
Loans	0.9	—	—
Loan Repayment	0.8	—	—
Nurse Anesthetists	—	—	0.4
	$48.65		$51.18

Nursing Input into AMA Policy Committee

NLN President-Elect Dr. Jacquelyn Kinder has represented the League on an American Medical Association advisory committee charged with developing a health policy agenda for the American people, which the AMA sees as the basis for a Congressional proposal.

Several work group sessions and hearings have been held, with diverse representation from the health field. In addition to the League, the American Nurses' Association and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing have represented nursing in the work groups. Testimony has been presented on such topics as biomedical research, health professions education, health resources, delivery mechanisms, and payment for service. Responsibility for managing patient care has proven to be a controversial issue, with participants consistently voicing opposition to the singling out of physicians as supraordinate to other members of the health care team.